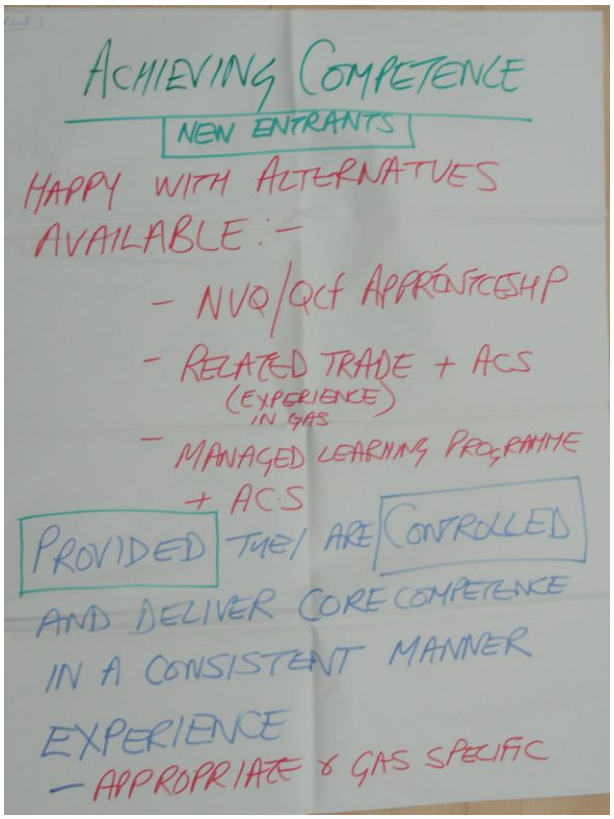
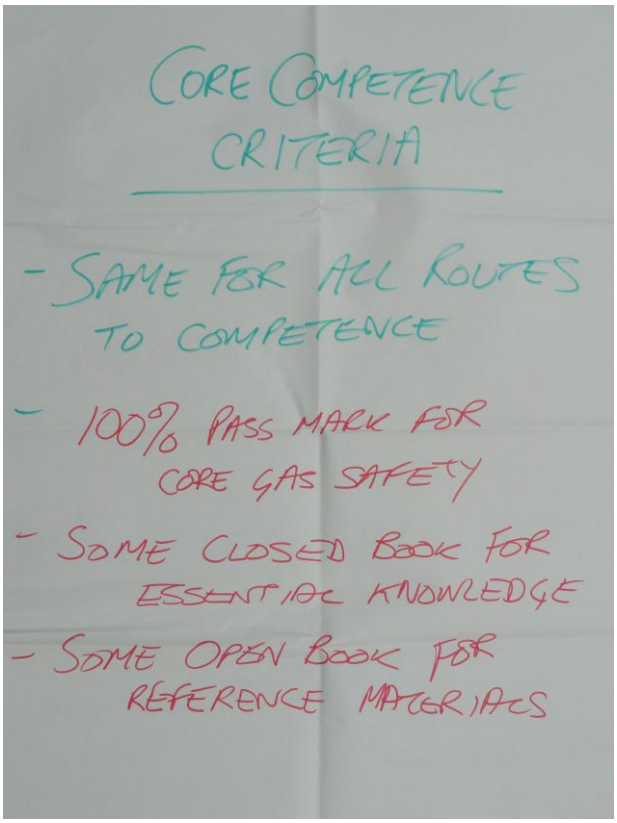
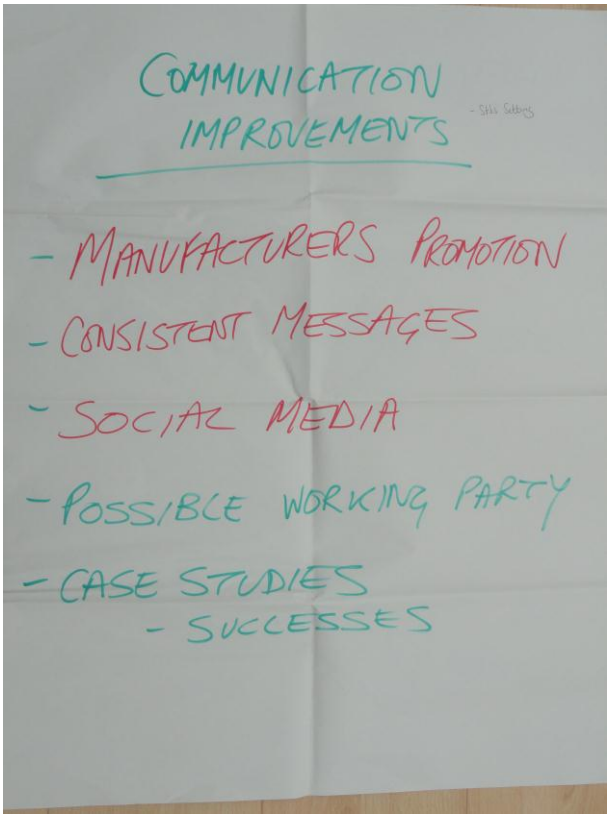
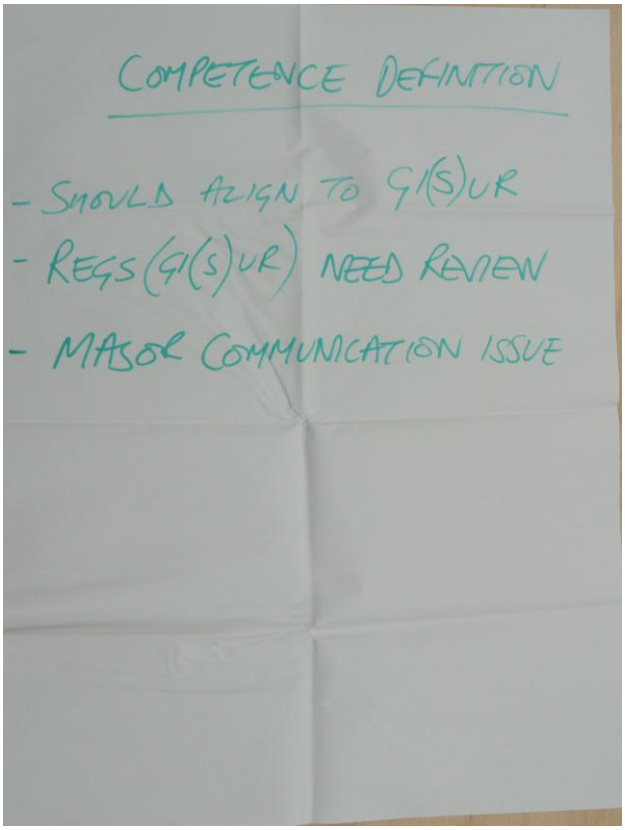
ENERGY & UTILITY SKILLS
ATTRACT › DEVELOP › ASSURE

Appendix 2: Competence Review Workshop: Achieving Competence (November 2012)

	
Concept of the 3 existing routes into the industry was accepted by the group. However, there seems to be some doubt as to the consistency of them.	The core competence criteria need to be the same for all routes.

	
Consider all forms of communication to provide a consistent message to all areas of industry.	Definition of competence should be aligned with the guidance for GSIUR which is currently being reviewed.

Consideration raised (6.10.1)
The industry wants to develop other options that would be similar or equivalent to ACS, which has more flexibility in how they are delivered and managed for registration with Gas Safe Register. e.g. EU Skills proposals for a GCS have been released (see Section 4.4.2 - Alternate option to ACS for employers).

Recommendation (1)
The group felt that the 3 existing routes (QCF, Related Trades (ACS) and Managed Learning programmes) into the industry are fit for purpose provided they are controlled and consistent. Work experience needs to be gas specific and cover an appropriate range.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Develop rules that would ensure a consistent approach for each route to registration, in particular collecting evidence of work experience i.e. sufficient, current, appropriate, relevant and reliable.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Develop rules: Low Implementation: Medium

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
Develop Rules: EU Skills to facilitate suitable working group. Implementation: CBs/ACs/TCs. Once established it would be subject to UKAS audit procedures.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Develop rules: Short term if given adequate resources, otherwise medium-long if relying on existing resources

Consideration raised (6.10.1)
There is currently a 100% pass mark, although this is supported by several retakes and an 'open book' culture. There is scope for discussion on adopting a revised model e.g. changes to pass mark, a ''closed book' approach in certain core elements. There are strongly held and widely differing views on this within the industry.

Recommendation (2)
The group felt that the 100% pass mark should be maintained with the following provisos: 100% pass mark for all essential for core gas safety elements, some closed book questions for essential knowledge, open book questioning for reference material.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Make changes to the scheme rules and provide guidance to assessment centres to ensure consistent implementation

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Develop rules: Low, Implementation: Medium

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
Develop Rules: EU Skills to facilitate suitable working group. Implementation: CBs/ACs/TCs. Once established it would be subject to UKAS audit procedures.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Develop rules: Short term if given adequate resources, otherwise medium-long if relying on existing resources.

Consideration raised (6.10.1)
Improve communication in order to develop a clearer understanding of where the legal responsibility for the measurement of competence sits. It is not widely understood within the gas industry or the process by which competence standards are set or changed.

Recommendation (3)
The group have recommended that all forms of communication should be considered to provide a consistent message to all areas of industry e.g. • Manufacturers promotions • Social media • Trade Press • On-line forums

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Set up a working group to consider the next steps, and look at past case studies to establish whether such methods would be successful.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Low – it would require people to give up their time. However, once a suitable platform has been agreed then the likely costs would need to be estimated.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EUS to facilitate the working through the existing Standards Setting structure i.e. SCF and GILG.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium term, this activity will be picked up as the group starts to implement changes to the existing processes and procedures.

Consideration raised (6.10.1)
Highlighting and promoting the role of the SSB and its decision making processes will increase understanding and increase levels of engagement across the sector, especially the sole trader which makes up over 80% of all registered businesses.

Recommendation (4)
Develop methods of communication that will enable a wider view to be expressed, particularly from a sole trader perspective. Currently the Registered Gas Engineer magazine is used, consideration needs to be given to other forms of communications.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Industry to share information with Trade Associations e.g. • APHC • SNIPEF • CIPHE Another consideration would be use ACS assessment centres to pass communicate with engineers , in particular Sole Traders

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Low: providing existing methods of communication are used i.e. trade press and method already used by the assessment centres.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EUS would facilitate this method with Industry participating in the execution.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium: would implement this initiative within the scope of the project i.e. within the agreed timescales

Consideration raised (6.10.1)

Once SSB's role is clearly understood, this may lead to an increase in contributions and industry comments in regards to proposed changes/improvements in the future e.g. Sections of industry are unaware of the recent change of S/NVQ qualifications for new entrants to the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) introduced in August 2011.

Recommendation (5)

Increase communication levels through the channels detailed in the previous recommendations e.g. Trade press etc.

Suggest a practical method of implementation

Industry to share information with Trade Associations e.g.

- APHC
- SNIPEF
- CIPHE

Another consideration would be use ACS assessment centres to pass communicate with engineers , in particular Sole Traders

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)

Low: providing existing methods of communication are used i.e. trade press and method already used by the assessment centres.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.

EUS would facilitate this method with Industry participating in the execution.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)

Medium: would implement this initiative within the scope of the project i.e. within the agreed timescales

Consideration raised (6.10.1)

Industry identified that consideration needs to be given to a review of the 'Standards of training in safe gas installation Approved Code of Practice (ACoP)' (CoP20) 1988 to reflect advancement in working practices. e.g. The inclusion of combustion analysers is also needed, which are widely used by industry.

Recommendation (6)

The group suggested that the ACoP should align to the latest version of GSIUR and in particular the revised guidance and ACoP.

Suggest a practical method of implementation

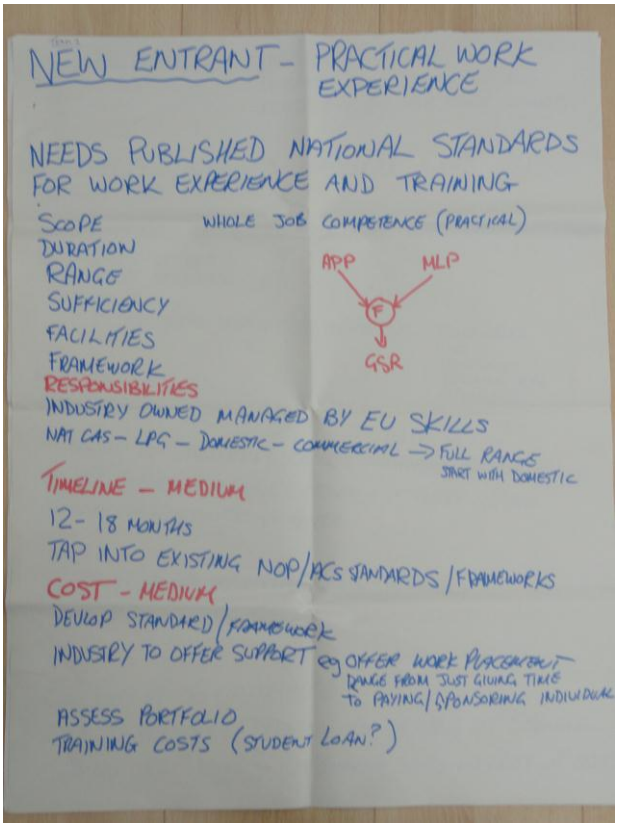
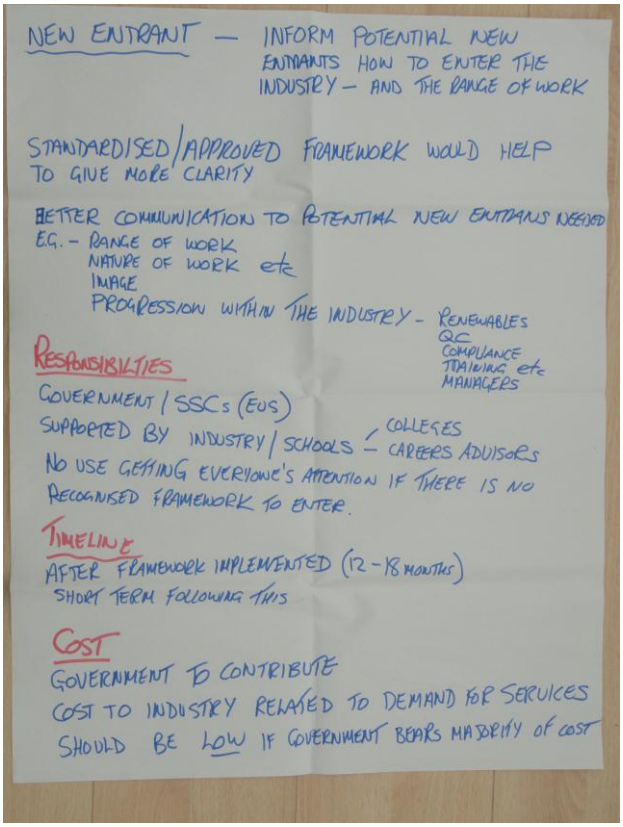
Align to current HSL56 working group and in particular the re-writing of the ACoP which is currently been undertaken by EUS and IGEM

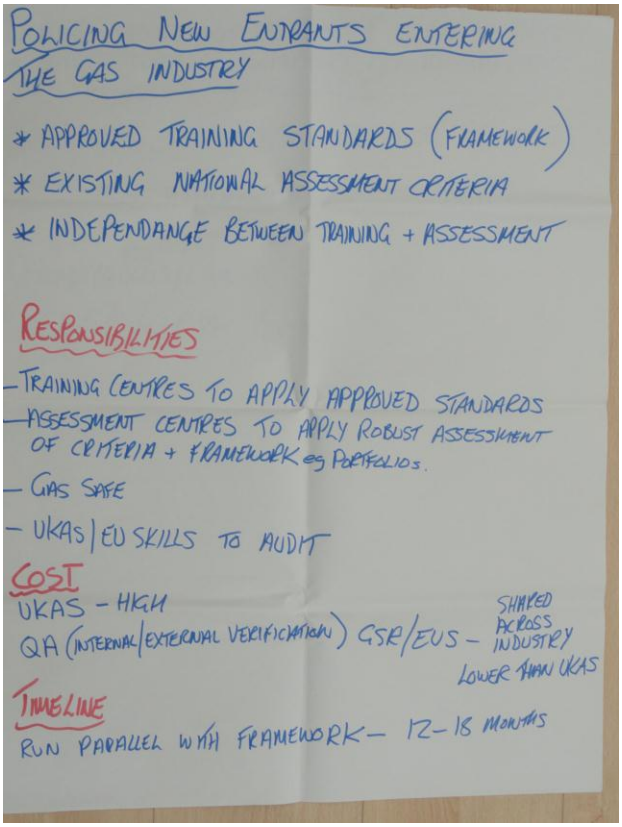
Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)

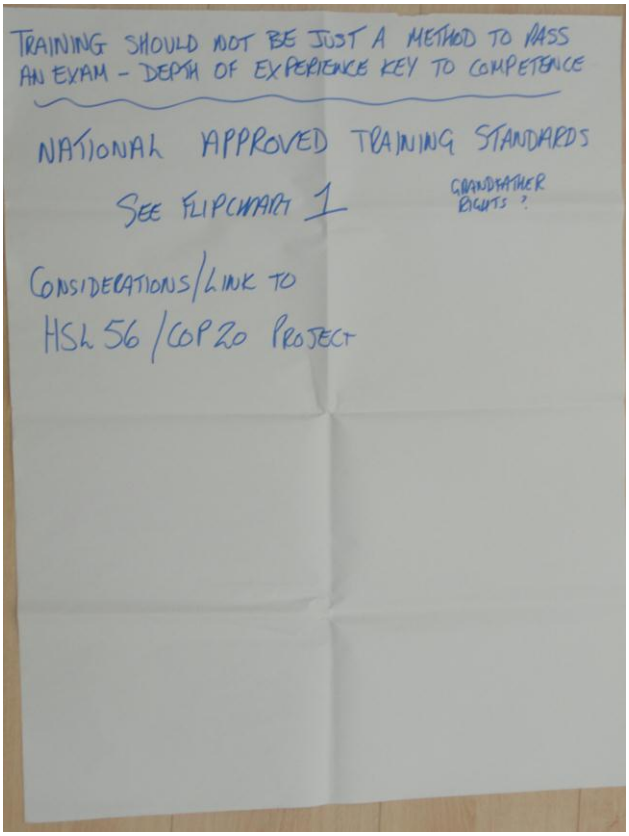
Medium: there will be set up costs for the working groups, communicating , implementing the changes to industry and possible increased costs for Trading Providers and subsequently for trainees.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EUS/IGEM and representatives from Industry.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Short term, there are set timescales for the re-writing of ACoP 20

	
New entrants: there is a need for a set of published national standards for work experience and training.	A published national standard would help to give more clarity regarding the needs of the learner.





Approved training standards/framework can be mostly resourced from existing criteria. There needs to be independence between training and assessment.	HSL56 project should support the requirement for producing a national framework and standards for training and work experience.

Consideration raised (6.10.2)

Areas for consideration:
To help new entrants gain practical work experience, it was suggested it would be beneficial to bring the three constituent parts together for both theoretical knowledge to be applied on-site and vital practical experience gained for the individual. It was suggested that this could be in the format of a framework/infrastructure' which could be developed nationally.

This would cover:
- new entrants/candidates,
- colleges/training providers, and;
- Gas Safe registered businesses willing to pass on their gas knowledge, skills and experience.

Recommendation (7)

Develop and publish a set of national standards for work experience and training for new entrants to the industry. This should include:

- Scope
- Duration
- Range
- Sufficiency
- Facilities
- Framework

Suggest a practical method of implementation

Implement via redevelopment of ACoP document Standards of Safety in Safe Gas Installation.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Cost: Medium Standard/framework to develop. Industry to offer support by offering work placements etc. to allow people to gain work experience etc. Portfolios would need to be assessed and verified. Training costs would increase (Student loan type arrangement could be made?)

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU Skills/IGEM Align to HSL56 working group.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium: 12-18 months. HSL 56 project due to be completed by November 2013. Existing NOS/ACS criteria etc. will provide a sound base on which to build.

Consideration raised (6.10.2)
When being recruited into the gas industry, practical skills and knowledge were by far the most important needs for the individual learner. Industry requires clear information regarding what is involved in working in different sectors of the gas industry. Also straightforward communication regarding how to enter industry will benefit the industry and aspiring gas engineers.

Recommendation (8)
Improve communication to potential new entrants to the industry. Developing a standard/approved framework as described in previous consideration would help to give more clarity and therefore be easier to communicate. Include guidance on requirements such as: • Range of work • Nature of work Use communication channels to attract more people to the gas industry by promoting its image and also the range of jobs/roles available for potential engineers to progress to such as: • Managers • Quality control and compliance roles • Training • Other forms of energy such as renewables etc.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Utilisation of all appropriate communication channels and media (see other areas of competence review)

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium to high: High if new products/qualifications are developed. Spending a lot of time and effort promoting the gas industry as an attractive proposition would need a clear recognised framework to promote.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
Sector Skills Councils/Standard Setting Bodies EU Skills/IGEM HSL56 group. Government Supported by Industry/Schools/Colleges etc.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium

Consideration raised (6.10.3)
National guidance needs to be reviewed for the minimum levels of gas work training received and experience gained for all new entrants; irrespective of their 'route' into the gas industry.

Recommendation (9)
Align to HSL56 Working Group.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
SSCs and SSF to implement the requirements the Framework for Training Document that will replace ACoP 20 (HSL 56)

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium to High Medium cost approach could be developed using an industry method of approving training providers. High if linked to existing ACS accreditation.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU Skills/IGEM/Industry representatives.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium

Consideration raised (6.10.3)
Industry requests that training is not only a method to gain entry to ACS to 'pass the exam'. Depth of experience is seen as the key to an individual's level of competence and this can only be gained over time.

Recommendation (10)
Develop Nationally Approved Training Standards to apply consistently across all routes to registration

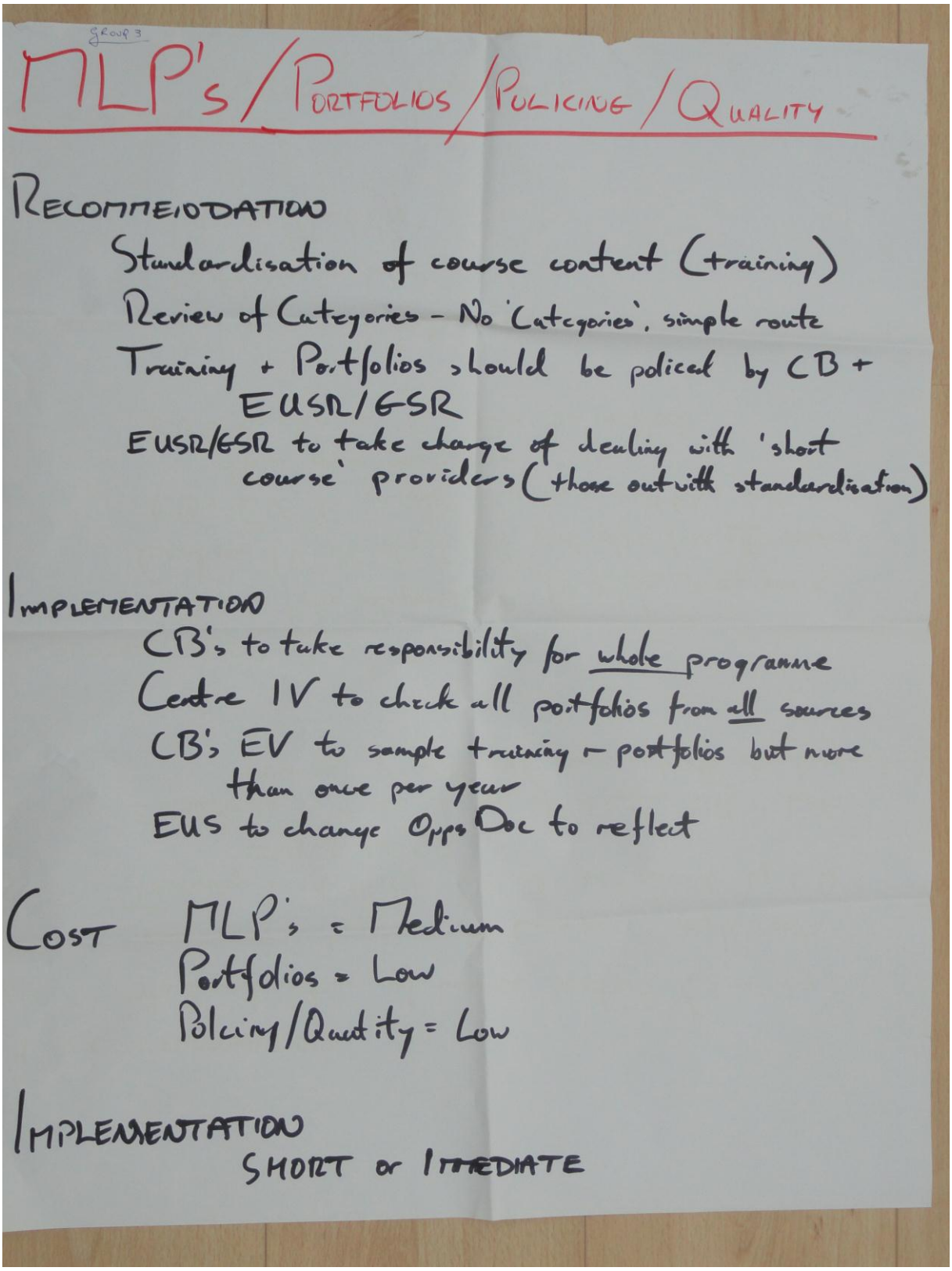
Suggest a practical method of implementation
SSCs and SSF to implement the requirements the Framework for Training Document that will replace ACoP 20 (HSL 56)

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium to High Medium cost approach could be developed using an industry method of approving training providers. High if linked to existing ACS accreditation.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU Skills/IGEM/Industry representatives

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)

Medium



This feedback covers the four considerations listed below and considers how Learning programmes can be standardised and monitored for all new applicants using that particular routs into the industry:

Consideration raised (6.10.3)
Independent third party accreditation could be considered as a way to deliver consistency within MLP/short courses (e.g. by UKAS) and the checking of content contained within portfolios of evidence (e.g. more site visits to check). Training providers commented that regulation may increase cost

Recommendation (11)
Standardisation of course content to be included as part of the new 'Framework for Training' documents, this document will replace ACoP 20 and will be supported by pending changes to HSL56.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
To be implemented as part of the HSL56 initiatives, these changes will be specified in the new Framework for Training document. The on-going surveillance on these programmes (including the candidates portfolios) will be carried out by the Standards Setting Body and through Internal and External verification carried out by the CB's.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium: Standard/framework to develop

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU Skills/IGEM Align to HSL56 working group and subsequent amendments to the Scheme Rules (Ops Doc) for ACS

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium: 12-18 months. HSL 56 project due to be completed by November 2013. The scheme documentation will require changes to cater for this proposal and changes subsequent to the changes to the 17024 standard.

Consideration raised (6.10.3)
In conjunction with developing consistent certification of new entrants across all routes of entry, there is seen to be a need for sufficient policing and monitoring of all training providers offering such training and assessment regarding gas work.

Recommendation (12)
The Framework for Training document should stipulate a need for on-going surveillance of all training programmes.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Implement via redevelopment of ACoP document Standards of Safety in Safe Gas Installation and changes to the ACS scheme rules.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium: but will form part of the HSL56 on-going project costs.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU Skills/IGEM Align to HSL56 working group.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium: 12-18 months. HSL 56 project due to be completed by November 2013. The scheme documentation will require changes to cater for this proposal and changes subsequent to the changes to the 17024 standard.

Consideration raised (6.10.3)
With regard to portfolios of practical gas work gained on-site, falsification of evidence needs to be minimised or eradicated. A greater level of targeted site inspections will be seen as helping to prevent falsification and fraud

Recommendation (13)
Portfolios should be policed under guidance provided by the Standards Setting function and applied under the internal and external verification structure of the CB's. Standards for portfolios will be detailed in the Framework for Training document and the scheme rules as set out in the Operations document.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Standards for portfolios to be detailed in the Framework for Training document and the scheme rules as set out in the Operations document.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Low/Medium: will form part of the HSL56 and 17024 (2012) on-going project costs.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU skills through the Standards Setting function, which includes consultation with the SCF, GILG etc.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium: 12-18 months. It will form part of on-going projects i.e. HSL56 and the amendment of the 17024 scheme documentation.

Consideration raised (6.10.3)
Industry expects that, where the quality of training falls short of industry requirements, sanctions should be developed and applied to those providing the training in order to raise standards overall.

Recommendation (14)
Once that the Industry standards have been agreed and implemented, ACS centres will only accept candidates who have received approved training. The training providers will also be subject to the on-going verification process.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Implement via redevelopment of ACoP document Standards of Safety in Safe Gas Installation and changes to the ACS scheme rules.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium: 12-18 months. It will form part of on-going projects i.e. HSL56 and the amendment of the 17024 scheme documentation.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU skills through the Standards Setting function, which includes consultation with the SCF, GILG etc.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium: 12-18 months. It will form part of on-going projects i.e. HSL56 and the amendment of the 17024 scheme documentation.

Consideration raised (6.10)
Include validated and approved appliance industry courses that contain gas safety information with a form of recorded assessment for the individual.

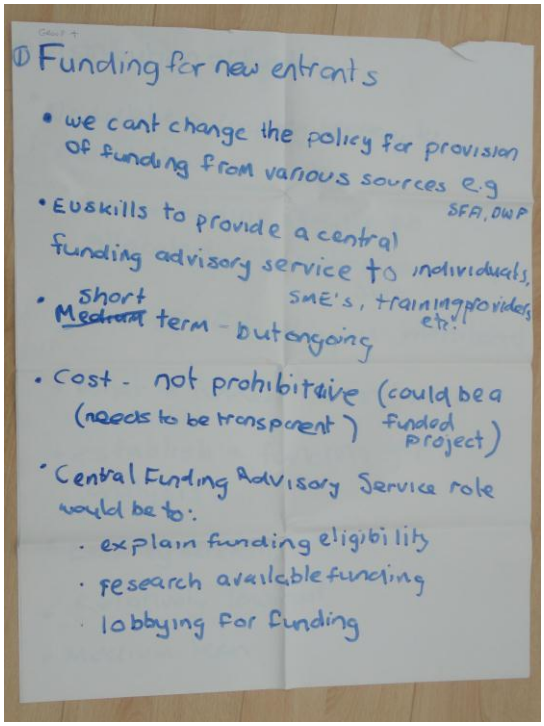
Recommendation (15)
Such courses would need to be endorsed under the new Framework for Training document but would also need to outline the amount of training that related to matters of gas safety, otherwise it would prove difficult to connect directly to an proof of competence. This type of Continuous Professional development applies more to re-assessment than achieving competence through an initial assessment.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Apply principles to the Framework for Training document

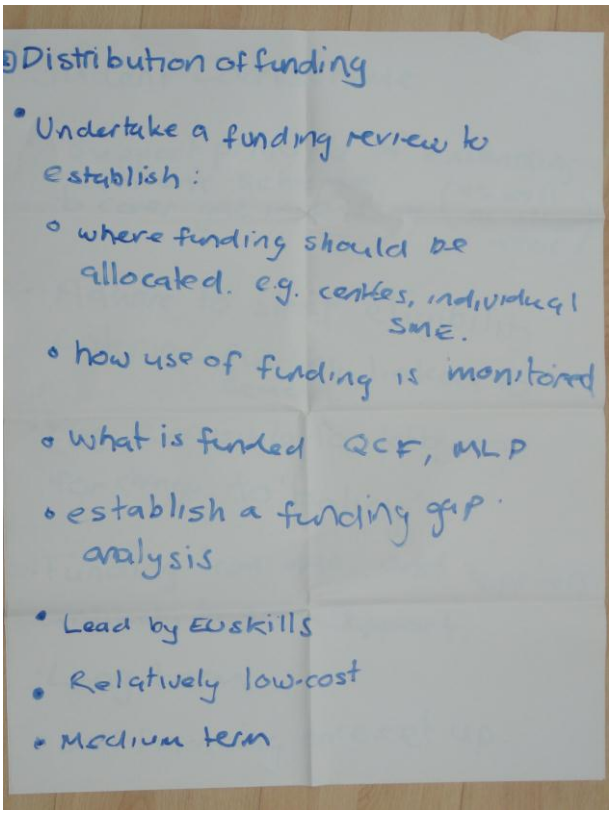
Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
High: due to the need for additional administration and verification costs, this does not relate to existing processes already in operation.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU skills through the Standards Setting function, which includes consultation with the SCF, GILG etc.

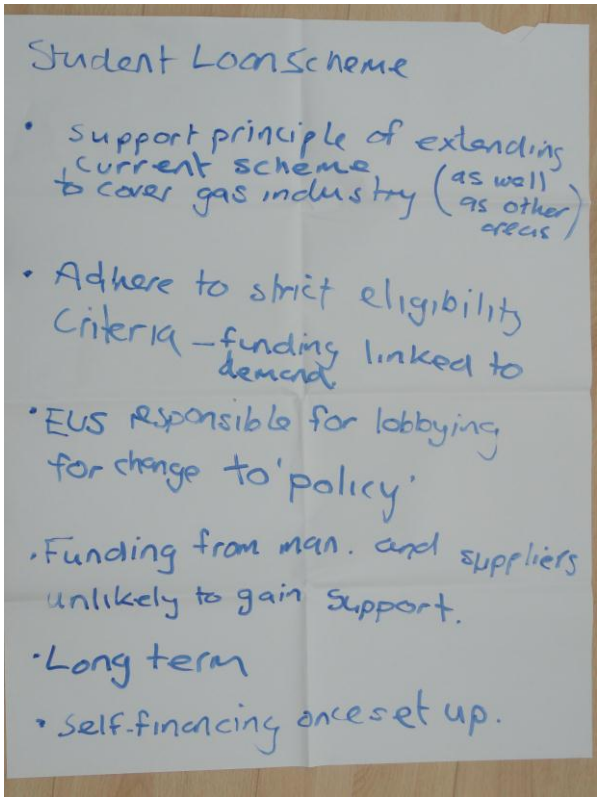
Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium to Long: as this process does not fit into existing working groups.



There is a need for additional funding for mature candidates wishing to enter the gas industry.



Investigate funding to establish how it is structured and distributed.



Should those who are not eligible to claim funding be offered a student loan or similar?

Consideration raised (6.10.4)
Industry requires clear guidance for small businesses – especially sole traders – on how to navigate the perceived 'bureaucracy' in being able to access funds for training/employing new starters.

Recommendation (16)
Funding requirements to be made clearer and more accessible to Industry.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
EU Skills to provide a central funding advisory service to individuals, SME's and Training Providers etc.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium: Not prohibitive as it could a funded project, will need to be transparent.

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
EU Skills

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Long Term: establish central funding advisory role in order to: • explain funding eligibility • research available funding • lobbying for funding

Consideration raised (6.10.4)
Requests for clearer communication as to 'how' and 'where' businesses could apply for potential funding was a recurring theme.

Recommendation (17)
Covered by previous consideration

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Covered by previous consideration

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Covered by previous consideration

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
Covered by previous consideration

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Covered by previous consideration

Consideration raised (6.10.4)
Respondent's suggestions were made for potential re-allocation or re-distribution of existing funds i.e. not just for colleges/training centres – but also for employers.

Recommendation (18)
Undertake a funding review to establish: • where funding should be allocated • how use of funding is monitored • what is funded (QCF, MLP etc.) • establish a funding gap analysis

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Facilitated by EU Skills

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Relatively low costs: depending on admin costs

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
Sector Skills councils for the gas utilisation footprint i.e. EU Skills and Summit Skills

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Medium term:

Consideration raised (6.10.4)
Industry feels that additional funding could be sourced from gas suppliers, manufacturers etc. or the creation of a student loan scheme (similar to academic university courses).

Recommendation (19)
Expand the Student Loan scheme to include new entrants to the Gas Utilisation industry.

Suggest a practical method of implementation
Funding linked to demand, adhere to strict eligibility criteria.

Estimate likely cost to industry (low, medium, and high)
Medium: depending on admin costs

Agree responsibility e.g. EUS, CB's, Industry etc.
Sector Skills councils for the gas utilisation footprint i.e. EU Skills and Summit Skills, responsible for lobbying for change to policy. Could self-financing once it has been set up.

Classify implementation period (short term, medium term, long term)
Long Term: