**Memorandum of understanding between the British Woodworking Federation (BWF), National Association of Shopfitting (NAS) and [Your College/Provider Here]**

This document sets down an outline of how the British Woodworking Federation (BWF), The National Association of Shopfitters (NAS) and [insert provider name here] will work together as part of a network of Centres of Excellence to support the recruitment and development of talent for the Shopfitting and Woodworking sector in the UK.

**Aim**

To improve support for the Shopfitting, Woodworking and Joinery sector by establishing a network of Centres of Training Excellence

**Background**

This project is focused on protecting and developing an infrastructure that supports over 6,000 firms currently engaged in the woodworking and shopfitting sector. Wood Trades and Interior Fitout sector needs to recruit 4,320 to its workforce every year to 2020. Significant erosion in the number of facilities offering further education courses in wood machining, shopfitting and joinery training is evident across the UK. With the introduction of the Apprentice Levy driving larger businesses to take on apprentices, this situation is likely to exacerbate by intensifying availability of Centre space.

By establishing a number of Centres of Excellence across the UK, the BWF and NAS hope to support their members, the wider industry and the providers by focussing efforts on a number of top class facilities looking to ensure they have the critical mass to succeed and are effectively supported by the sector.

**Agreement**

In signing this agreement the parties undertake to work together to pilot a Centre of Excellence

The pilot will focus on a selected providers to test the Centre of Excellence model to ensure it delivers for employers, apprentices and providers

The Centre of Excellence will adopt the new national apprenticeship standards (once approved) as the bedrock of their training.

At the outset BWF and NAS will map out with each pilot Centre of Excellence what elements they can deliver within a qualification and use other Centre of Excellences in the network to plug the gaps, meaning providers can be truly responsive to employer and apprentice skill needs.

This Centre of Excellence will ultimately form part of a wider training framework, where each Centre of Excellence may also have additional courses – which will act as ‘bolt-on’ units – that may not be part of an apprenticeship standard, but may serve to enhance training to some employers’ needs and an apprentice’s skills set. The Centres and the BWF would pool these ‘bolt-ons’ for employers to pick and choose from if they wish, at additional cost. This network will also allow BWF to promote the USPs of each Centre.

Centres commit to enrolling their apprentices on the BWF Woodworking Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme (free of charge), which aims to embed a culture of continuous learning and up-skilling throughout their careers.

BWF and NAS will issue certificates to each apprentice on completion of their apprenticeship programme which will encompass the main apprenticeship standard, listing all units passed, and any ‘bolt-on’ units undertaken. Each Centre will be able to claim that they are on the BWF or NAS endorsed Apprenticeship Programme. This will not affect standard certificate issuance by Awarding Organisations etc.

Centres commit to providing impartial and relevant Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), ensure that all apprentices and employers are directed to the appropriate qualification and delivery method, even if this may not be with your centre, and use the network to ensure the best for the employer and apprentice. BWF and NAS will ensure this is reciprocated across the Centre of Excellence network.

The Centre will help shape and commit to a process of audit and continuous monitoring (through 360o feedback loops) with a view to ensuring that the employer, student and provider needs are all met throughout the apprentice period. This will be specifically targeted at the joinery, woodworking and shopfitting departments and will be designed to compliment any general activity.

The BWF and NAS will support recruitment activity, highlighting the Provider as a Centre of Excellence in this field wherever possible helping to drive apprenticeship numbers this will include, but not be limited to developing support tools for local schools engagement and working through ‘GoConstruct’ and the ‘Wow! I Made That’, and ‘Wood MakeIT!’ campaigns.

The BWF and NAS will provide a certificate and other promotional materials to support the Provider in promoting itself as a Centre of Excellence in this field.

The BWF and NAS will also work with the providers to support more commercial use of the providers, highlighting modules and developing Minimum Technical Competence Courses that can be delivered using provider facilities and help to supplement provider income.

The BWF and NAS will through regular dialogue with the provider teams review how further support (e.g. learning resources, careers guidance guest speakers, access to materials etc) can be provided.

Where possible BWF and NAS will arrange/provide access to training resources for tutors to keep them up-to-date with the latest industry developments and trends

BWF and NAS will open up to Providers and Training providers all the services of the Trade Associations to support elements of best practice, (e.g. Health and Safety, future trends/industry challenges etc).

The Centres will agree to become active participants in the Woodworking Industry Training Forum (WITForum) and Shopfitting Independent Training Forum (SITF) – the training and skills lobby & promotion arms of the two Trade Associations – to help cement the concept as an agile, responsive and collaborative venture and to develop a better understanding of current and future training needs.

As part of the assessment process Centres will support BWF and NAS in developing case studies and talking head videos on the ‘GoConstruct’ platform and through sector specific campaigns such as ‘Wow! I Made That’.

**Key considerations**

As a pilot project it is vital that all parties enter into this agreement with a spirit of collaboration and it is viewed as an agile project that will adapt through experience and circumstance

**Force Majeure**

This document is intended to last an initial period of twelve months to enable delivery against the above goals. It is not legally binding and will be dependent on the availability of funds, personnel and other applicable resources. The MOU can be terminated at any time in writing by either party and amendments may be requested at any time.

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Iain McIlwee, CEO Robert Hudson, CEO

On behalf of the On behalf of the

British Woodworking Federation National Association of Shopfitting

Date: Date:

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[Principal/MD Name & Title]

 On behalf of

[Your College/Provider Here]

Date: