

College Skills Centre Being Put To The Test

Skillbuild NI Ltd and South Eastern Regional College (SERC) have launched the search for Northern Ireland's most talented construction apprentice.

The Skillbuild NI National Competition, which will be held on 13 and 14 April 2011 at SERC's Skills Centre in Newtownards, is a skills competition designed to challenge the best young talent in the construction industry. It has been developed to promote excellence among young craftspeople throughout Northern Ireland.

Providing a unique stage to showcase excellence and talent, Skillbuild NI National Competition is hosted annually each spring and 100 of the top apprentices compete to win coveted titles in 13 different construction craft areas ranging from brickwork to wall and floor tiling.

The Skillbuild NI competition gold medal winners can go forward to compete in the National UK Finals held annually each autumn. Medal success at National level gives the apprentice the opportunity

to take part in specialist training and compete in elite competitions for the opportunity to be part of the UK Skills Team representing the UK in WorldSkills. This year WorldSkills comes to London, from 5-8 October and seven local construction apprentices have been selected for Squad UK undertaking rigorous training and practical trails prior to potential selection to Team UK later this summer.

Speaking at the launch David Cooper Chairman of Skillbuild said, "We are delighted that SERC is hosting the Skillbuild NI National Competition this year in their excellent new facilities in Newtownards. Skills competitions are an excellent way to showcase the wealth of opportunity within our industry for young people. "Recruiting the talent of the future is a challenge our industry must meet if we are to avoid the skills gaps of the past and skills competitions have a great role to play in stimulating interest by showing the public just how exciting, challenging and rewarding a career in construction can be.

