



Working with soils: soil science continuing professional development

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The British Society of Soil Science launched the Working with Soils professional competency programme in 2011. This was in response to concerns from practitioners and professionals of a significant skills gap in various sectors that require soil science skills. The programme includes one and two day courses that cover the qualifications, knowledge and skills required of a professional scientist or engineer conducting a range of contract work. All courses qualify for continuing professional development points with various professional practice schemes. Three courses cover the foundations of soil science namely; describing a soil profile, soil classification and understanding soil variability in the field and landscape. Other tailored courses relate to specific skills required from consultants particularly in the planning process where land is assessed for agricultural quality (agricultural land classification). New courses this year include soil handling and restoration that provides practitioners with knowledge of the appropriate management of large volumes of soil that are disturbed during development projects. The courses have so far successfully trained over 100 delegates ranging from PhD students, environmental consultants and government policy advisors.