

# Power and Networks

## Summer 2023 publication

### Introduction

In November 2022, the Green Jobs Delivery Group established a pilot task and finish group. The early work of this power and networks working group helped to establish a process for other sector groups to follow. The group formulated a set of head start actions which government and industry agreed to make early progress on. These can be found in the [Powering Up Britain: The Net Zero Growth Plan](#) on page 102-103.

Recap of the principles of intent and head-start actions, which we published within the Net Zero Growth Plan on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023

#### ***Principles of intent:***

- 1. By summer 2023, industry (led by EDF, with support from Energy and Utilities Skills partnership (EUSP) and the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB)) will conduct and collate research on workforce demand and skills gaps within the power and networks sectors, specifically related to net zero. This will cover the skills and workforce picture in England, as well as that of the devolved administrations where relevant.*
- 2. By summer 2023, industry (led by EUSP) will then refine the group's initial assessment of workforce barriers. This will cover skills and workforce in England, and of the devolved administrations where relevant.*
- 3. By summer 2023, industry (led by ECITB, with support from EUSP) will next map and identify gaps in routes to competence, including through apprenticeships, qualifications, and industry schemes. This will draw upon the work of the DfE and Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE). This will cover skills and workforce in England, and of the devolved administrations where relevant.*
- 4. In autumn 2023, government and industry will work together to identify how best to overcome barriers which threaten the sectors' ability to get people into key occupations in sufficient numbers. For example, DfE will identify opportunities to flex skills programmes in line with the challenges identified via 1 and 2 above.*
- 5. These actions, along with information on how progress towards them will be monitored, will then be included as part of the Net Zero and Nature Workforce Action Plan in 2024.*

#### ***'Head start' actions:***

- 1. Building upon this, by autumn 2023, industry (led by National Grid and supported by EUSP), and government will work together to support modular and agile training routes into key occupations within the power and networks sectors.*
- 2. Industry, led by EUSP, will identify where investment in modular or short courses could be increased by developing new Skills Bootcamps. DfE will respond by supporting the roll*

out of new Bootcamps, through the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) or by responding to the local grant holder.

3. By autumn 2023, industry (through EUSP) will work with the IfATE via the Energy and Utility Employer Advisory Panel (EAP) to explore how apprenticeships and modular technical qualifications can best support skills development in sectors.

4. By winter 2023, Industry, led by EUSP, will pilot an approach to maximising the employer training estate, delivering training to an industry standard, aimed at meeting industry rather than individual employer needs. This would involve, for example, industry collaborating on using one another's training estate to maximise the talent pipeline, and providing training on behalf of other employers where capacity allows. This requires industry to explore agreeing and setting output standards.

5. By spring 2024, DfE will provide communications to industry, to support employers and training providers to engage with recently launched flexi, portable, and accelerated apprenticeships, to boost apprenticeship numbers by maximising use of the variety of progression routes.

6. Industry, led by EUSP, will use its 'workforce assessment' to inform regulators of projected workforce demand as part of efforts to ensure sufficient provision for workforce resilience.

7. Industry, led by EUSP, will explore (jointly led with ECITB) potential skills passporting arrangements for the power and networks sectors.

8. By autumn 2023, industry, led by EUSP, will identify opportunities for growth and routes to competence presented by apprenticeships. There are no plans to review the Apprenticeship Levy at present, but we will continue to develop and support a suite of improvements to the apprenticeships system for employers.

9. In 2023, industry (led by IEMA/ CIEEM) and IfATE will explore how apprenticeships and other non-degree level routes to environmental management and regulation could be improved or created.

10. The group has discussed wider workforce issues, including attracting people into net zero roles, and addressing diversity and inclusion issues. As a first step, the group is collating and analysing a range of data and evidence available to identify potential actions.

11. Government will work with partners to ensure that net zero and green careers are considered in all relevant current and proposed careers campaigns across government and industry. This includes the Green Careers Hub, as well as supporting awareness raising of net zero and green careers by disseminating information to careers leaders and careers advisers in schools, colleges and in the community.

## Progress update against head-start actions

### **1) Analysis of the workforce and skills needs of power and networks industries.**

#### **Actions set out in the Net Zero Growth Plan:**

By summer 2023, industry will conduct and collate research on workforce demand and skills gaps within the power and networks sectors, specifically related to net zero. This will be led by EDF, with support from Energy and Utilities Skills partnership (EUSP) and the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB). This will cover the skills and workforce picture in England, as well as that of the devolved administrations where relevant.

By summer 2023, industry (led by EUSP) will then refine the group's initial assessment of workforce barriers. This will cover skills and workforce in England, and of the devolved administrations where relevant.

#### **Progress update:**

Work has focused on the construction, operation and maintenance of the infrastructure needed to generate and distribute the power needs of net zero, including onshore and offshore wind, solar, and nuclear together with the electricity networks that are essential for delivery.

This will inform a mapping exercise, as committed to in March, to ensure that there are sufficient routes available for individuals to achieve competence in these critical roles, which the group plans to complete over the summer. Government and industry will then work together to identify opportunities to match workforce supply and demand. This work will be used to inform the development of the Net Zero and Nature Workforce Action Plan.

### **2) Skills Bootcamps**

#### **Actions set out in the Net Zero Growth Plan:**

Industry have committed to work with DfE to propose new Skills Bootcamps in FY 2023-24 aimed at addressing immediate workforce skills needs in key low carbon sectors.

They will work at pace to identify common skills demands that could be addressed by Skills Bootcamps.

By the end of 2023, we will have at least 35 different bootcamp courses across England supporting greener construction, transport, and green energy and industry sectors.

#### **Progress Update:**

Skills Bootcamps are playing an important role in delivering the skills needed to fill the jobs this growing sector is generating. We currently have Skills Bootcamps delivering flexible training for new skills in green construction, renewable energy, industry, protection of natural resources, and transport sectors.

DfE will continue to engage with employers in green sectors to ensure that this skills offer continues to grow and meet their needs, supplying a pipeline of skilled workers to fill their vacancies.

### **3) Careers Resources progress update**

The group has also started exploring what more can be done on providing careers resources for attracting people into green roles in the sector.

As an example of action group members are taking in this area, the [Green Careers Hub](#) was launched by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in June, and has been supported by Defra and DWP. The Hub provides information and support for people looking to find out about green skills, green jobs, and potential career pathways.

The [Energy & Utilities Jobs](#) website, managed by Energy & Utility Skills, provides a platform for anyone looking for roles that will deliver net zero and address the climate emergency. Working with industry, their marketing efforts have resulted in over 3 million people viewing these job opportunities each year, and established a talent pool of over 17,000 people, made up of 42% BAME and 19% females.

The Empower Her in Energy campaign was launched and ran earlier in 2023, funded and supported by the member companies of the Energy Leaders' Coalition and ignited by POWERful Women, aiming to attract more women aged between 16-21 into the energy industry through apprenticeships. Due to the success of the campaign, the Energy Leaders Coalition have agreed to continue to fund the campaign for another year with a view to broadening the campaign out beyond apprenticeships.

### **4) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion progress update**

Across the course of its lifespan, the group has focused efforts on supporting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) which is important to increasing the recruitment pool and increasing representation of under-represented groups.

Conversations to date reflect a range of issues that the group needs to address, and the availability of existing data and action targeted at elements of EDI. Short-term activity will consider existing data and best practice and better connecting existing government initiatives to employers.

In parallel, the group will examine the barriers to recruitment and retention to establish a long-term social impact plan. Given the cross-cutting nature of many of the issues identified, the Green Jobs Delivery Group will consider both overarching as well as sector-specific responses as appropriate.

**Building upon the actions agreed in March, the group has agreed the additional actions set out below, focused upon addressing workforce issues:**

1. During 2023-24 we will map sector engagement with the Disability Confident scheme, and identify and act where improvements in visibility are needed. (lead – government; supporting – industry)
2. We will ensure the sector is well-represented in future jobs-focused comms campaigns, for example through better collection and use of case studies (lead – government; supporting – industry)
3. We will collect data on the image and perceptions of the sector from jobseekers and workers, to identify to what extent this is a workforce barrier and inform further actions (lead – industry; supporting – government)
4. We will increase availability and promotion of resources to improve understanding of working in the sector and the opportunities available, for use by those providing careers support including the Jobcentre Plus network and DfE-funded Careers Hubs (lead – industry; supporting – government).
5. We will convene a workshop in the summer of 2023 to (including a broad range of diversity characteristics and social mobility), joining up with the work of the existing Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership ED&I Forum.
6. By autumn 2023, industry will gather and collate existing data on equality diversity and inclusion issues, barriers and causes, and will collate and share best practice for supporting equality, diversity and inclusion. They will then assess whether further research may be required to fill any gaps in data, or understanding of barriers and solutions (lead – industry; supporting – government).
7. Government and industry will then develop a set of actions for equality, diversity and inclusion, to be included in the net zero and nature action plan in 2024. We will provide a further progress update against these actions in the autumn.

We will update on progress against the net zero power and networks workforce actions set out here and within the Net Zero Growth Plan, and build upon these, within the Net Zero and Nature Workforce Action Plan in 2024.



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**Amy Jenkins, Deputy Director, Green finance, workforce and investment for net zero, Net Zero Strategy Directorate, and co-chair of the net zero power and networks workforce working group.**