



OFFICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS APPOINTMENTS

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BUSINESS APPOINTMENT APPLICATION: The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, former Minister of State for Schools - unpaid appointment with UNESCO

1. You approached the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (the Committee) under the government's Business Appointments Rules for Former Ministers (the Rules) seeking advice on taking up an unpaid role as Member of the UNESCO Global Alliance on the Science of Learning for Education (UNESCO).
2. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. The Committee has considered the risks associated with the actions and decisions made during your time in office, alongside the information and influence you may offer the UNESCO, as a former minister. The material information taken into consideration by the Committee is set out in the annex.
3. The Committee's advice is not an endorsement of the appointment - it imposes a number of conditions to mitigate the potential risks to the government associated with the appointment under the Rules.
4. The Ministerial Code sets out that ministers must abide by the Committee's advice. It is an applicant's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment. Former ministers of the Crown, and Members of Parliament, are expected to uphold the highest standards of propriety and act in accordance with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

The Committee's consideration of the risks presented

5. When considering this application, the Committee¹ took into account this role is unpaid². Generally, the Committee's experience is that the risks related to unpaid roles are limited. The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the Government by considering the real and perceived risks associated with former ministers joining outside organisations. Those risks include: using privileged access to contacts and information to the benefit of themselves or those they represent. The Rules also seek to mitigate the risks that individuals may make decisions or take action in office to in expectation of rewards, on leaving government. These risks are significantly limited in unpaid cases due to the lack of financial gain to the individual.
6. There is no particular overlap with your time in office and your proposed role. You did not make any regulatory, policy or commercial decisions which specifically affected UNESCO. The unpaid nature of this appointment and the nature of its work limits the real and perceived risk of you making improper use of information you had access to while in office for your personal benefit.

The Committee's advice

7. The Committee did not consider this appointment raises any particular proprietary concerns under the government's Business Appointment Rules. Whilst there are inherent risks associated with your access to sensitive information and contacts, the standard conditions below, preventing you from drawing on your privileged information and using your contacts to the unfair advantage of your new employer, will sufficiently mitigate in this case.
8. Taking into account these factors, in accordance with the government's Business Appointment Rules, the Committee advises this appointment with the **UNESCO's Global Alliance on the Science of Learning for Education** be subject to the following conditions:
 - you should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of yourself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to you from your time in ministerial office;
 - for two years from your last day in ministerial office, you should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of the UNESCO (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); nor should you make use, directly or indirectly, of your contacts in the government and/or ministerial office to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients); and

¹ This application for advice was considered by Andrew Cumpsty; Isabel Doverty; Hedley Finn OBE; Sarah de Gay; The Rt Hon Baroness Jones of Whitchurch; Dawid Konotey-Ahulu CBE DL; The Rt Hon Lord Eric Pickles; and Mike Weir. Michael Prescott was recused.

²By unpaid the Committee means that no remuneration of any kind is received for the role. Applicants must declare where it is agreed or anticipated they may receive remuneration or some other compensation at some stage in the future.

- for two years from your last day in ministerial office you should not undertake any work with the UNESCO (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients) that involves providing advice on the terms of, or with regard to the subject matter of a bid with, or contract relating directly to the work of, the UK government or its arm's length bodies.
9. The advice and the conditions under the government's Business Appointment Rules relate to your previous role in government only; they are separate from rules administered by other bodies such as the Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and the Commissioner for Standards³. You are reminded that as a Member of Parliament you have a separate ban on paid lobbying under the Parliamentary Code of Conduct. It is an applicant's personal responsibility to understand any other rules and regulations they may be subject to in parallel with this Committee's advice.
 10. By '*privileged information*' we mean official information to which a Minister or Crown servant has had access as a consequence of his or her office or employment and which has not been made publicly available. Applicants are also reminded that they may be subject to other duties of confidentiality, whether under the Official Secrets Act, the Civil Service Code or otherwise.
 11. The Business Appointment Rules explain that the restriction on lobbying means that the former Crown servant/Minister '*should not engage in communication with government (Ministers, civil servants, including special advisers, and other relevant officials/public office holders) – wherever it takes place - with a view to influencing a Government decision, policy or contract award/grant in relation to their own interests or the interests of the organisation by which they are employed, or to whom they are contracted or with which they hold office*'.
 12. You must inform us as soon as you take up this work or if it is announced that you will do so. Similarly, you must inform us if you propose to extend or otherwise change your role with the organisation as depending on the circumstances, it might be necessary for you to seek fresh advice.
 13. Once this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, we will publish this letter on the Committee's website.

The Rt Hon Lord Pickles

Annex - Material information

The role

³ All Peers and Members of Parliament are prevented from paid lobbying under the Parliamentary Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Lords. Advice on your obligations under the Code can be sought from the commissioners for standards.

1. You said UNESCO is a specialised agency of the United Nations, promoting international peace and security through cooperation in education, science and culture.

UNESCO's website said that its Global Alliance on the Science of Learning for Education is:

- an international group of experts who represent the scientific arm of UNESCO at high-level global political events to advocate for evidence-based policy formulation, planning and implementation;
 - a platform that to encourage discussion between scientists, policymakers and practitioners
 - an international community for knowledge sharing, mutual learning, collaboration and capacity building, with a focus on supporting the development of professionals in Africa and other low- and middle-income countries.
2. UNESCO has a relationship with government, but not with the Department for Education. The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are responsible for this relationship.
 3. You wish to take up a part-time, unpaid role as a Member of the UNESCO Global Alliance on the Science of Learning for Education. You said your role would include:
 - participating in discussions about the Science of Learning in international education.
 - chairing the Foundational Learning sub group of the UNESCO Global Alliance on the Science of Learning for Education.

You said your role with UNESCO would not involve lobbying the UK government, ministers or officials.

Dealings in office

1. You confirmed that:
 - you did not have contact with the UNESCO whilst in office;
 - you made no decisions specific to UNESCO;
 - you had no access to sensitive information that could unfairly advantage UNESCO; and
 - there is no relationship between your former department, DfE, and UNESCO.

Department assessment

1. DfE confirmed that there is no departmental relationship with UNESCO, nor did you meet with the organisation whilst you were in office. DfE said that you

made no policy, commercial or regulatory decisions specific to UNESCO in office.

2. DfE recommended standard conditions.