

## Meeting the Future Skills Challenge

### Discussion Paper – The Climate Emergency and the Skills Challenge

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#### Background

[Scotland's Future Skills Action Plan](#) (FSAP) published in September this year recognises that the Global Climate Emergency is one of the defining issues of our time which poses an unprecedented and fundamental threat to us all.

Scotland's skills system needs to respond to both the challenges of the Climate Emergency as well as making sure all of our population, particularly those in low paid employment, are resilient and equipped to take advantage of the huge opportunities, for upskilling and retraining, that responding to Climate Change will generate

The Plan provides a vision for our development of skills policies and programmes in the years ahead:

*Scotland's highly skilled workforce ensures we are an ambitious, productive and competitive nation. Scotland's skills system will be the foundation on which we will deliver these ambitions, supporting our people through-out their working lives, and empowering our business to take advantage of future opportunities. A culture of shared investment in Scotland's future workforce will unlock the potential of our people and businesses and deliver inclusive growth.*

The Plan has four themes aligned to the [Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board's Future Skills Mission's](#) recommendations. These are:

- Increasing system agility and employer responsiveness;
- Enhancing access to upskilling and retraining opportunities;
- Ensuring sustainability across the skill system; and
- Accelerating the implementation of the learner journey review.

#### Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets ) (Scotland) Act

In May 2018, a new Climate Change Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament to raise the ambition of Scotland's domestic emissions reduction targets in line with the UN Paris Agreement. Following the First Minister's declaration of a global climate emergency in April 2019, and receipt of advice from the UK Committee on Climate Change in May, and now the Climate Change Act has Royal Assent [31 Oct]. The Act sets a net zero target date of 2045 for Scotland and a revised 2030 target of 75% emissions reduction.

## **The Global Climate Emergency: Scotland's Response**

Work is already underway to identify the skills required to support our transition to a net zero economy through the Just Transition Commission. In addition, the 2019 PfG commitment for SDS to develop a **Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan** will provide a specific focus on this work, and will build on the existing SDS' Skills Investment Plan for the Energy Sector.

Scotland already has many of the skills required to facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy. These skills exist across many of our existing sectors such as energy, engineering, construction, and chemical science but with the growing complexity within many roles, and rapidly changing technology environment, there is a need for a collaborative and integrated approach to skills alignment and provision

Our **Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan** will set out a framework for skills investment:

- how government and other public bodies will work with our Agencies and industry;
- how we will maximise opportunities for people to upskill and reskill; and
- how we will create a supportive and collaborative business environment for research and innovation in new low carbon industries so that we are able to support Scotland's people to gain the new skills that will be needed in moving into areas such as oil and gas decommissioning, offshore wind energy, the construction and energy efficiencies of our buildings, manufacturing and the decarbonisation of our transport system.

There is a pipeline of activity already in place to develop the evidence base across key priorities:

### **Low Carbon Transport**

Transport Scotland Skills Workstream has been established with the aim to set the strategic position in relation to supporting the skills requirements for increasing Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV ) uptake in the short and long term

### **Energy Efficiency**

A Routemap was published in May 2018, including setting minimum standards for all buildings based on Energy Performance Certificates

### **Circular Economy.**

Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS) and SDS are leading a partnership to create a Circular Economy Skills and Education Hub, which will be a virtual, collaborative and coordinating network of partners and stakeholders each playing a pivotal role in providing leadership, strategic direction, influence and guidance on CE and the development of knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes, standards and education.

### **Offshore Wind**

A Scottish Offshore Wind Industry Council has been formed, co-chaired by Energy Minister, Paul Wheelhouse, with a formal Skills Group taking forward the skills

element of the Sector Deal. Working with the FE sector to develop a sector wide curriculum.

### **Industry Initiatives - Oil And Gas Sector - Roadmap 2035**

The sector claim that Roadmap 2035 is one of the first major industrial responses to government plans to reduce or offset carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 in the UK and 2045 in Scotland. It was published following extensive engagement with over 2,500 industry stakeholders. It includes coordinating activities to reduce emissions from the production of oil and gas, which currently accounts for 3 percent of UK total greenhouse gas emissions, and understanding how the oil and gas industry can play a key role in developing and commercialising low carbon technologies including Carbon Capture Usage and Storage and hydrogen.

We strongly support the joint UK-Italy bid to host the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) 26 conference in Glasgow in 2020.

### **Suggested discussion questions**

- What opportunities do you see for your business in proactively responding to the climate emergency?
- How well equipped do you think your business is to respond to the climate emergency?
- Does your organisation have the skills and knowledge it needs to realise the opportunities and respond to the challenges?
- What do you think are the key skills and knowledge requirements for you organisation in the context of a climate emergency?
- Can you identify any clear skills gaps? These may be specific operational or technical skills, or more connected to leadership, change and innovation.
- Are there any specific skills interventions you think would most help your organisation?