

21 March 2019

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**Dear Member,**

The National Audit Office (NAO) published its first inquiry into apprenticeships in 2016. In 2018 the NAO invited stakeholders to contribute to its second review, which was published on 6 March 2019. The report can be accessed [here](#).

Energy & Utility Skills was invited by the NAO to be among the first UK industry representatives to give evidence, and this took place at a meeting in July 2018, supported by written evidence in September 2018. The evidence provided to the NAO comprised of views gathered from employers representing the sector via the *Apprenticeship and Technical Education Advisory Group (ATEAG)*.

The NAO report, entitled “The Apprenticeships Programme”, reviews government and market progress to date against the findings and recommendations made in the 2016 report. Energy & Utility Skills is recognised as one of just five employer organisations who contributed.

The NAO sought evidence against three key questions:

- Has good progress been made on the recommendations in the last NAO report on apprenticeships, which was published in September 2016?
- Is the Apprenticeships Programme achieving its stated goals and aims?
- Is the Department for Education ensuring that employers and training providers engage with the programme and levy system as intended?

The evidence provided by Energy & Utility Skills members was judged to be clear, well informed and focussed. It answered the points raised but also called on the NAO to examine the main strategic impacts since the Apprenticeship Levy was introduced. Key issues responded to or raised by members are referenced in the report and a high-level analysis is [available here](#).

The next steps are for the Westminster government to be formally interviewed and challenged at the Public Accounts Committee before going on to various Select Committees and All Party Parliamentary Groups. The ATEAG will be taking the outcomes of the report in to account in its work to optimise UK apprenticeship policy for the energy and utilities sector.

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