

The Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP
Secretary of State for Education

Tuesday 28 July 2026

Ref: Congratulations and introduction from the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership

Dear Secretary of State,

Many congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Education. We are writing on behalf of the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership CEO Council to introduce our collective work and reaffirm our commitment to working with you and your Department to ensure that education policy continuously evolves to support young people to develop the confidence, curiosity, character and competence to become trusted, talented and motivated colleagues across the UK's economy.

The Partnership brings together employers across energy, water and critical infrastructure supply chains. Partners directly employ more than 200,000 people, support many more through extensive supply chains and generate more than £120 billion in annual turnover. Our 2025 to 2030 Skills Strategy, endorsed by over 20 industry and sector partners, provides a shared approach across four priorities: research, attract, develop and retain.

The scale of the opportunity is significant. Our workforce research estimates that more than 312,000 new people will be required across energy and utilities by 2030 to deliver planned investment and maintain essential services. Meeting this demand will require stronger connections between education and employment, greater awareness of technical and apprenticeship pathways, and clear routes that enable young people of every background to progress into skilled, safe and rewarding careers. To help achieve this, we:

- Mobilise our memorandum of understanding with The Careers & Enterprise Company to strengthen the connection between education and employment across energy, water and critical infrastructure, using employer engagement and workforce evidence to help young people understand where future jobs will be, the pathways into them and the skills and behaviours employers need.
- Support young people to understand and access future careers through our work with DESNZ on the Clean Energy Jobs Plan. In partnership with industry, we recently launched Destination Energy, including a webinar specifically focused on school leavers. We are also supporting delivery through the Social Inclusion Forum and seeking to develop the clean energy sector's first Apprenticeship Unit.
- Develop workforce evidence with industry, including evidence that informed the Migration Advisory Committee's recent Temporary Shortage List recommendations.

- Set the second year priorities for our 2025 to 2030 Skills Strategy, including seven UK wide policy priorities that we look forward to progressing with your Department and governments across the UK.

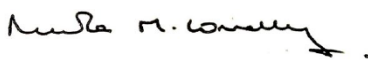
There are a number of opportunities for immediate impact. These include:

- Strengthen careers information and employer engagement so that young people, parents, carers and educators understand apprenticeships and technical education as high quality routes into skilled employment.
- Strengthen pathways from education into employment, ensuring that young people can see clear progression from school and college through technical education, apprenticeships and into skilled careers.
- Increase opportunities for young people to experience employers and workplaces in energy, water and critical infrastructure, helping them understand the breadth of careers available and the skills and behaviours required to succeed.
- Meet with Paul Cox at the Labour Party Conference, where he will be attending throughout the event.

Andrew Findlay and Paul Cox are also scheduled to meet with Alan Milburn tomorrow, Wednesday 29 July, providing a further opportunity to connect our work on workforce demand with education, participation and clear routes into skilled employment for young citizens who are not in education, employment or training. We also enclose our recent letter to the Minister for Skills, setting out the apprenticeship priorities recently agreed by the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership CEO Council.

By continuing to work together, we can help more young people understand the opportunities available to them, strengthen pathways from education into skilled employment and ensure that the UK's future workforce is motivated, inspired and equipped to succeed. We look forward to continuing our positive partnership with you, your Department and governments across the UK.

Yours sincerely,



Nicola Connelly
EUSP CEO Council Co-Chair
Chief Executive
ScottishPower Energy Networks
Group



Andrew Findlay
EUSP CEO Council Co-Chair
Chief Executive
M Group



Paul Cox
Group Chief Executive
Energy & Utility Skills Group

ENC: Ministerial Letter - Skills Minister Baroness Jacqui Smith - Monday 13 July 2026