



Rt Hon Gavin Williamson, MP
Secretary of State,
DfE

2/7/20

Dear Gavin Williamson

Training and skills: Implementing the Committee on Climate Change Report

The publication of the report '*Reducing UK emissions: 2020 Progress Report to Parliament*' on June 25th, 2020 is an important assessment of the policies needed to deliver the UK's climate ambitions. It sets out a 'strategy for a net-zero workforce that ensures *'a **just transition**' for workers transitioning from high-carbon to low-carbon and climate resilient jobs.*'¹

We are writing to you as a group of organisations who campaign for an industrial strategy that mainstreams skills development, climate action and social justice. This is a moment when we need to get the economic recovery process right because as the committee make clear we have a short timeframe to get the UK climate targets on track. In fact, we take the view that the level of action required is even greater than that set out in the Committee's report. Some of the latest research suggests that UK's planned reductions in emissions, even if it hits net zero by 2050, would be two or three times greater than its fair share under the landmark 2015 Paris agreement₂

Both students in education and those in or about to enter the workforce require an education system that equips them with the knowledge and skills to adapt to the demands of a zero-carbon economy. Urgent action is needed to address the growing skills gap in the UK. The Institute of Government has described further education and skills reform as *'the worst failure of domestic British public policy since the Second World War.'*₃

Page 41 of the report lists some of the actions required in your department:

'Working with DWP, BEIS and the Home Office, develop a strategy for a Net-Zero workforce that ensures a 'just transition' for workers transitioning from high-carbon to low-carbon and climate resilient jobs, integrates relevant skills into the UK's education framework and actively monitors the risks and opportunities arising from the transition. This strategy should include the development and roll-out of plans for training and skills, with buildings and manufacturing being priority areas'

We seek clarification at the earliest opportunity of:

1. What is the timescale for putting this strategy in place by 2021.
2. How you will ensure that the requirements of a 'just transition' are delivered within the strategy?
3. How you intend to engage with student organisations, teaching unions, the wider trade union movement and community organisations in the process of policy development?
4. How you intend to fund the delivery of the strategy?
5. How do you propose to liaise with the (DWP/BEIS) to ensure interdepartmental cooperation?

Skills and training for a net-zero economy are an obvious COVID-19 recovery stimulus approach, and we would appreciate a response on how your Department intends to deliver this.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graham Petersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Graham Petersen

Secretary, Greener Jobs Alliance⁴

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References

¹ Committee on Climate Change Report, June 2020

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/reducing-uk-emissions-2020-progress-report-to-parliament/>

² Climate Policy Research, May 2020

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14693062.2020.1728209>

³ Institute of Government Report, March 2017

<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/all-change>

⁴ Greener Jobs Alliance <http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/>