

# Submission from Skills Development Scotland Follow up Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee 22 March 2022

Dear Convener,

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on 22 March 2022 as part of your inquiry into the role of local government and its cross-sectoral partners in financing and delivering a net-zero Scotland. During the session I referenced several areas we could provide written supplementary evidence on, which are detailed below.

## Developing a Definition of Green Jobs

During the session I noted that part of the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP) pathfinder work is Developing a Definition of Green Jobs ([Read the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025](#)). Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has commissioned the University of Warwick and University of Strathclyde to define and estimate the number of green jobs in Scotland (covering current and future demand).

A short life working group has been established (a sub-group of the CESAP Implementation Steering Group) to support this work as it emerges, engage with relevant stakeholders and gain buy-in for the approach taken. This includes representatives from Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise, Transport Scotland and Energy Skills Partnership.

This work is expected to be completed in Spring 2022 and will contribute to and assist in defining green apprenticeships, pathways and frameworks.

## **Green Jobs Workforce Academy**

The Green Jobs Workforce Academy (GJWA) was a [100 day commitment](#) from the Scottish Government following the election in May 2021 ([read the Priorities of Government statement on 26 May 2021](#)), and is administered by SDS. The purpose of the GJWA is to provide Scotland's workforce with information about the changes in the labour market which will arise from the transition to net zero. Aimed at individuals over the age of 25, it provides a one stop shop through an online platform providing information for individuals keen to understand more about green jobs and the associated key sectors, raising awareness of the opportunities available. The GJWA also details the skills needed to transition to these opportunities, and links to the required training and funding sources, with information and links to apprenticeships, volunteering and training opportunities and related careers.

Work on the GJWA commenced in May 2021 following the election and over the following weeks User Research, Prototyping, Design and Development took place leading to a working version being ready for launch on 23 August 2021. We deployed

a significant part of our Design and Development Team during that time and contracted out research and other activity costing around £60,000.

The GJWA currently consists of:

- A dedicated website ([www.greenjobs.scot](http://www.greenjobs.scot)) which is part of the wider offer for adults
- Content on the key industries in the transition to Net Zero
- A course search tool which allows users to search over 20,000 courses in Scotland
- Access via live chat or phone to an SDS adviser.

Phase two, due to launch later in 2022 will include:

- A Skills Assessment tool which allows users to explore their own skills
- An automated booking system for an online consultation with an SDS Adviser.

The GJWA does not have physical premises, academic staff or students. As the Academy offer develops, it will become a comprehensive source of advice and information about the labour market opportunities coming out of the transition. Users will be able to register to receive personalised updates on their areas of interest, invitations to online and in-person events and information on opportunities which are relevant to them. The content and functionality will grow in parallel with the implementation of the wider CESAP.

The approved budget for phase two of the Green Jobs Workforce Academy is £255,000 for financial year 2022/23.

As I noted during the session, we are not in a position to track the extent to which training is undertaken through the Academy, for example the financial contribution towards a college course.

During the session I said I would explore with colleagues the information that was available on users of the Academy. We are not able to provide any information on who is viewing Academy webpages, however from 23 August 2021 to 31 March 2022 these key pages received the following number of page views:

- [The Green Jobs Workforce Academy](#) – 5,387
- [Jobs and courses](#) – 2,945
- [Industries](#) – 2,555

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Apprenticeships in the net-zero sector

Finally, you requested any available information from witnesses about the number of places available in colleges, universities and apprenticeship schemes in the net zero sector; data on this for each year from 2017 to 2024, as well as information on how it is determined which courses are included in this data.

There are over 100 different Modern Apprenticeship (MA) Frameworks, which are grouped by occupation. [Read the SDS Occupational Groupings 2021/22](#). MAs contain 3 key components:

- A relevant Scottish Vocational Qualification or alternative work-based qualification
- Core Skills (except for technical and professional apprenticeships where this component is 'Career Skills')
- Industry linked training

Sector Skills Organisations work in conjunction with employers and key stakeholders in their industry to develop MA frameworks to meet the skills needs of employers. As I noted during the session, we have an active programme of work to consider and review MA frameworks to ensure they reflect the skills that will be required in the future.

Data on MAs, including figures on MA starts and those currently in-training are published quarterly. We have supplied as an appendix full-year statistics for 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, and 2020/21 for both individual frameworks, and starts by occupational grouping. 2021/22 full year statistics will be published on 28 May 2022.

Details on Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships are available in annual progress reports, most recently published in June 2021:

- [Foundation Apprenticeships Progress Report June 2021](#)
- [Graduate Apprenticeships Progress Report June 2021](#).

We are not able to provide future data, as the number of potential apprenticeship starts will be determined by funding from the Scottish Government.

As you will note, apprenticeship statistics are reported by framework undertaken, rather than by the sector or industry the apprentice is working in. There is currently no 'net-zero' occupational grouping, although this issue is under consideration as part of the previously referenced work on defining 'green jobs'. A report commissioned by the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board '[Sustainability in Scottish Apprenticeships](#)' (November 2021) also notes that:

“with some sectoral differences, there was consensus that sustainability concerns should be considered and embedded within all apprenticeships, rather than siloed within certain 'green' occupations”.

In response to this report, SDS will work with SFC and the Scottish Government on the identification of actions to ensure that apprenticeships are maximising their contribution to the just transition. This includes ensuring that green credentials are embedded in apprenticeship frameworks and standards, and piloting and evaluating new apprenticeship models in sectors central to the transition.

We are happy to provide any additional written evidence or to return to the Committee to discuss work in progressing the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan – please let us know what might be helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Brodie

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Skills Development Scotland