

Policy Updates – March 2019

Apprenticeships

The National Audit Office (NAO) published its second review of apprenticeships on 6 March. Energy & Utility Skills members were amongst the first to be invited to give evidence to the NAO inquiry and their responses and recommendations are reflected at several points in the report, which can be found [here](#). Their comments welcoming the principles of new apprenticeships are acknowledged in the report's statement that employers generally have a positive view of apprenticeship reforms, as is members' concern about the slow development speed of standards, reflected in the NAO's finding that progress introducing new standards had been slow. Energy & Utility Skills was one of only five employer representative organisations cited in the report. Evidence provided to the NAO comprised of views gathered from employers representing the sector via the *Apprenticeship and Technical Education Advisory Group (ATEAG)*.

[Read more.](#)

National Infrastructure Commission

In his Autumn 2018 Budget, Chancellor Philip Hammond announced a National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) study into infrastructure resilience, to be published in spring 2020. The key outcome from the resilience study is expected to be a framework to consider resilience across economic infrastructure, for application during the next National Infrastructure Assessment. A scoping consultation to seek views on aspects that should be included in the study, which can be found [here](#), was opened on 5 March. Energy & Utility Skills asks all members to respond to the consultation, which closes on 1 April 2019, and recommend to the NIC that labour market resilience is included in the study's scope. Energy & Utility Skills' response to the scoping consultation can be found [here](#).

RIIO-2 Energy Pricing

The RIIO-2 energy pricing review will establish the gas and electricity price control framework from 2021. Energy & Utility Skills has worked extensively with members to seek to ensure that workforce resilience is embedded in Ofgem's price control methodology. Ofgem's consultation on methodology ran from December to March. Energy & Utility Skills' response can be found [here](#).

Qualification Funding Consultation

The Department for Education launched a consultation seeking views on its plans to withdraw public funding support for thousands of vocational qualifications as it advances its T Level programme. Details of the consultation which is open until June can be found [here](#).

For further information on ATEAG, apprenticeship and technical education policy please contact carl.jordan@euskills.co.uk