



# Skills and Post-16 Education Bill

Amendments (NC14, NC15 and Amendment 11) for the creation of an Offshore Training Scheme

## Summary

- The current offshore training regime is acting as a barrier for offshore workers in oil and gas to transition their skills into the renewable sector.
- A new Offshore Training Scheme is needed which will facilitate cross-sector recognition of core skills and training in the offshore energy sector and provide a retraining guarantee for oil and gas workers wishing to transition to careers in the green energy sector.
- Please add your name to the amendments (NC14, NC15 and Amendment 11) and vote in favour of them at report stage.

## Background

The UK is committed to reducing its carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. Tackling the climate crisis requires a rapid transition away from fossil fuels and into renewable energy. However, the workers who are already facing the effects of industry decline are not seeing any firm plan for a managed transition that would create opportunities and remove barriers to entering renewable energy industries.

Offshore workers in oil and gas hold the skills and expertise needed if we are to successfully transition to a renewable energy sector. It is essential, both for the success of the green energy sector and in ensuring that workers in high-carbon industries are not left behind, that there are clear pathways for those skills to be retained and transferred to renewables.

However, current issues with the training regime are acting as a barrier to offshore workers engaging in the transition with many skilled and experienced workers leaving, or looking to leave, the energy sector entirely.

## Current issues with skills and training for offshore workers

A 2021 survey<sup>1</sup> conducted by Platform, Friends of the Earth Scotland and Greenpeace UK, and published with RMT and Unite Scotland, showed that:

- Workers are paying an average of over £1,800 a year in industry training costs
- 97% are concerned about the UK's offshore energy industry training costs
- 65% said their employer contributed nothing to their training costs, including safety and first aid training, in the past two years - which is up from 45% before 2015

The training regime in the energy sector is fragmented with separate training bodies responsible for setting standards in different parts of the energy sector. As a result, offshore workers cannot readily have their existing skills and training recognised elsewhere in the energy sector. We need a training

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<sup>1</sup> <https://platformlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Training-Costs-Survey-Results.pdf>

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system that prioritises the urgency and importance of a fair and safe energy transition. It is critical for barriers and costs for workers associated with the transition to be removed.

This is a particular issue where workers are looking to transfer from oil and gas to wind, as they often need to work in both for some time to establish themselves and be able to secure regular employment in offshore wind. These workers are paying out of pocket to cover training for skills they already hold, and will have to do so twice to retain qualification in both sectors. For many workers they are unable to afford this, and we are therefore losing or missing workers who are otherwise keen and able to begin the transition.

To address this problem, in the 2021 survey, **94% of respondents said they would support an offshore passport**, which licences accredited workers to work offshore in any sector through a cross-industry minimum training requirement.

### **A new Offshore Training Scheme**

The amendments (NC14, NC15 and amendment 11) would serve to create a new Offshore Training Scheme, which would rectify this situation by aligning training and skills recognition where possible across roles and sectors, recognising that regular training is essential to health and safety, and that there may be sector specific top-ups required. These measures were created with offshore energy workers, and published with RMT and Unite Scotland.

**NC14** inserts a duty on the Secretary of State to publish an Energy Sector Skills Strategy, which will facilitate cross-sector recognition of core skills and training in the offshore energy sector. This will ensure that workers are no longer having to hold duplicate training to move between oil and gas and renewables, and facilitate a much smoother transition between sectors as we build up our renewables sector. It also reduces the potential for workers to become stranded in a high carbon industry.

**NC15** provides a retraining guarantee for oil and gas workers wishing to transition to careers in the green energy sector. It ensures that those workers have access to training, grants, resources and other support facilities to assist in their transition, and in finding well-matched, good jobs for the skills they already hold. This will ensure that the skills already within the energy sector are retained as we move to a low-carbon economy.

**Amendment 11** is a consequential amendment stipulating that the above new clauses should apply to Scotland

**Please add your name to these amendments and vote in favour of them at report stage**

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